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BAPTISTS

THE BAPTIST Record

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King to lead William Carey University

By William H. Perkins Jr.
Editor

William Carey University (WCU) trustees on February 15 removed the word "acting" from R. Thomas (Tommy) King's title of acting president, selecting him as the ninth leader of the Baptist-affiliated institution of higher learning based in Hattiesburg.

King had served as acting president since shortly after the September 21, 2006, death of Larry Kennedy, who was WCU president for eight years before succumbing to complications from Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), commonly known as Lou Gehrig's Disease.

"Dr. King was the unanimous and enthusiastic choice of the board (of trustees)," said board chairman Stan Burton, a member of First Church, Ellisville. "Dr. King's extensive background in education, his strong role in Baptist life, his dedication to the mission of Carey, and his sound management skills make him the right choice for continuous growth and accomplishments at the university."

King's career in education includes:

- Teacher and librarian, Walthall County Schools (1969-70).
- Teacher of biblical literature, creative writing, and English at R.H. Watkins High School in Laurel (1970-74).
- Elementary principal and assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction for Jones County Schools in Laurel (1975-81).
- Principal of Monticello High School (1981-82).
- Principal of East Marion Attendance Center middle school in Marion County (1982-83).
- School psychologist and special services director, and director of elementary education for the Columbia School District (1983-99).
- Dean of the School of Psychology and Counseling, vice-president for graduate and off-campus programs, executive vice-president, and professor of psychology at William Carey University (1999-present).

King also served as an adjunct faculty member at WCU (1975-99) and the University of Southern Mississippi (USM) in Hattiesburg (1977-86). In addition, he maintained a private counseling practice.

King holds a B.A. degree in Religion and Philosophy from WCU; B.D. and M.R.E. degrees from New Orleans Seminary; and M.Ed. and Ed.D. degrees from USM.

King served as pastor of Sandy Hook Church in Marion County for 14 1/2 years, before retiring earlier this month. He has also been a member of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee, and the Gulfshore Assembly Restoration Committee (following Hurricane Camille in 1969).

He was chairman of deacons at First Church, Laurel, and First Church, Columbia.



King

He also served as chairman (First Church, Laurel) and as a member (First Church, Columbia) of pastor search committees.

He was named Columbia's Outstanding Citizen in 1989 and WCU Alumnus of the Year in 1980. He was inducted into the Mississippi Lions Clubs Hall of Fame in 2002, after serving as district governor and receiving seven International President's Awards from the civic organization.

King continues to preach on a supply basis, and is a noted dinner speaker and conference leader.

"The presidential search committee sought the input from all facets of the William Carey University family. Faculty, staff, students, alumni, and friends of the university were invited to give their input into this very important task of identifying the right person to lead William Carey at this time in its history," said Odean Busby, a WCU trustee, chairman of the search committee, and member of First Church, Magee.

"After studying the responses of those interested in providing input and recommendations, and through a process of interviews, it became clearly evident to us that the right person to lead the University was already informally filling that role," Busby said.

King has been married for 42 years to the former Sandra Simmons of Mt. Herman, Louisiana. She is also a WCU graduate. They have one adult son, Dave, and two grandsons, Chris and Andrew.

"I am honored to be the first alumnus of William Carey to be chosen as president," King said. "My goals will be to honor God in all that we do, to strengthen the relationship between the university and the churches of our convention, to complete the vision that Dr. Kennedy had for the school, and to continue to allow the motto of William Carey University — Expect great things from God, attempt great things for God — to be the guiding principle for all that we do."

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board with which WCU is affiliated, commended trustees on their selection of King.

"Dr. King has been a part of the William Carey family for decades and has had that school on his heart the entire time," Futral said. "At the same time, because of an almost lifelong relationship with Dr. Kennedy, he was a much-needed friend and confidant during the most difficult days and shared the vision that was unfolding under Dr. Kennedy's leadership.

"He is an outstanding leader in his own right, but as acting president he has provided a bridge of comfort and progress for the school and will continue on in that direction."

William Carey University is located on three campuses. The main campus in Hattiesburg is set on 120 acres. Carey on the Coast is located in Gulfport with a scenic ocean view. The School of Nursing has a site on the campus of New Orleans Seminary.

Founded in 1906 and operated for decades as Mississippi Woman's College, the school was renamed William Carey College in 1954 in honor of the father of modern missions. The school also became coeducational that year. In 2006, the College's board of trustees renamed the institution William Carey University.

Carry offers baccalaureate degrees in the areas of arts, humanities, and sciences; education and psychology; business; religion; music; and nursing. The M.B.A., M.Ed., M.S. in psychology, and M.S.N. degrees and a specialist degree in elementary education are also offered.

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There's an old saw at the core of all politics that states, "You can't govern if you don't win." In these heady days after the monumental victories of last fall that swept one national party from control of Congress and installed another, some degree of triumphalism is to be expected. Unfortunately, such exuberance often leads to pet legislation being pushed by the new majority party that isn't necessarily good for the country.

Only a few weeks into their new congressional majority, Democrats are doing just that. Their agenda includes a noble-sounding bill entitled, Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA), which would expand employment protections to include individuals who are homosexual, bisexual, and transgender.

Most of us are familiar with the concept of homosexuality, where one person prefers the intimate company of another person of the same sex, and bisexuality, where one person makes no distinction in choosing intimate partners of either sex. "Transgender" may be a new word for a lot of folks, however.

Transgender is not actually a legitimate word. It's a political/social concoction, much like "homophobe." Transgender describes someone who believes they are of the gender opposite what their biological and anatomical features would imply. They believe they are trapped in the wrong body and prefer to act and dress like the opposite sex.

Now, America is a tolerant country — much more tolerant of many things than it should be. It's a fact that people with perverse lifestyles have lived among us since

"MAN - I THINK I WANT
TO GO TO ONE WITH PEOPLE
IN IT."



the beginning of the Republic. Advocacy groups have even tried to link such behavior to some of the Founding Fathers.

The proposed ENDA legislation, however, is yet another attempt to mainstream those lifestyles and force us to accept them as legitimate. Baptist Press reports that Democratic National Committee Chairman Howard Dean vowed to the Washington Blade, a homosexual publication, to do "everything in my power" to pass ENDA.

Such talk makes Christian and pro-family groups nervous for obvious reasons, but

also because there are apparently no exclusions in the current legislation for churches or religious organizations. That right — if ENDA passes in its present form, churches and groups like Focus on the Family may be compelled to hire people from those three classifications. At the very least, churches and groups would have to legally justify not hiring an applicant from those classifications.

"We're concerned about the Employment Non-Discrimination Act. When you have a very clear Christian mission, you want to hire people that are in line with those beliefs," said Amanda Banks, federal policy analyst for Focus on the Family Action, in a Baptist Press interview.

Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission in Nashville, last year joined 40 conservative leaders in denouncing legislation aimed at granting extraordinary rights to politically-favored groups like homosexuals.

"Granting special rights and protections to homosexuals is inevitably a step toward removing rights from those who oppose homosexuality," the leaders said in a letter to then-Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist.

The proposed ENDA legislation is a near-perfect example of that concern.

Christians, like members of any other group in this country, are entitled to be involved in governance at every level — and we need to be involved. Only an intense and dedicated effort to influence the direction of our government can produce the impact we should be having on public officials. It's up to us to stand up for what's right, and to ensure that those public officials hear us loud and clear.

Get involved, stay informed, and pray. Above all, pray.

NFL holds firm on church events during Super Bowl

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP and local reports) — Responding February 4 by e-mail to Baptist Press concerning a flap over how churches can use the copyrighted broadcast of the Super Bowl, National Football League (NFL) spokesman Greg Aiello emphasized that the NFL had not altered its policy about mass out-of-home viewing of the league's championship game.

"Nothing has changed. We have no issue with churches holding Super Bowl parties under our longstanding guidelines that hundreds of churches adhere to every year," Aiello wrote hours before the game. He was responding to a question about a report on WorldNetDaily.com that the NFL apparently had eased curbs on churches planning festivities related to the championship.

Unknown is the impact the restrictions had on churches on this year's game day nor what the eventual fallout will be for the NFL and its advertisers because of the NFL's inflexibility toward churches and favoritism toward sports bars.

According to an e-mail NFL attorney Rachel Margolies sent

to Indianapolis' Fall Creek Church on January 31, the NFL restricts showing of the game only on televisions not larger than 55 inches and allows only one television per audience. Also prohibited, according to her e-mail, are "events that promote a message" in connection to the game, as well as entrance fees. The TV curbs essentially rule out church-wide events except for the smallest of congregations.

The NFL exempts some drinking establishments, except for the prohibition against charging for admission, waiving the restrictions for sports bars because their "normal, everyday business operations... are to show televised sports events. They do not bring in televisions to create a special event around our games," Aiello wrote on February 2. "That is the difference."

Fall Creek Church, a Southern Baptist congregation, was ordered by the NFL to change its plans or cancel the event. According to Aiello, the NFL objected to the church's "charging admission, using large, theatre-style screens, and advertis-

ing it," calling the violations a "misappropriation of our event."

The church planned to project the game onto a 12-foot screen and announced the event on its website, viewed mainly by members, asking for a fee, explained by Fall Creek's pastor John Newland, as an offset for the costs of snacks. SBC records show Fall Creek has about 400 members.

In materials obtained on February 1 by Baptist Press, the NFL notified the church that the use of the "Super Bowl" name and its plan on charging admission to show the game "on a big screen" violated the NFL's copyrights. Newland responded to the NFL by saying the church would drop the admission charge and would not use the "Super Bowl" name. The NFL replied that the church still would be in violation of copyright law because it was using the large screen.

The league also said the church — if it held a Super Bowl party conforming with the law — would not be able to promote the church or Christianity. The church had planned on showing a video

highlighting the Christian testimonies of Indianapolis Colts head coach Dungy and his counterpart, Lovie Smith of the Chicago Bears.

"[You admit ... that part of the benefit of using our broadcast to host such an event is that it may allow you to bring your message of Christian values to non-Congregants; i.e., you will be using the event to promote your church and its values," NFL attorney Rachel Margolies wrote Newland. "While this may be a noble message, we are consistent in refusing the use of our game broadcasts in connection with events that promote a message, no matter the content."

However, official events leading up to the game included the Super Bowl Gospel Celebration and the Super Bowl Breakfast sponsored by Athletes in Action, a Campus Crusade for Christ ministry. Both events were singularly focused in message, featuring Christian testimonies from players and coaches, active and retired.

Also, Christians like Dungy and Smith have been unashamed to share about their faith at Super Bowl media events.

'Amazing' story to be told in new movie

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — William Wilberforce isn't a household name in America, but an upcoming motion picture is trying to change that.

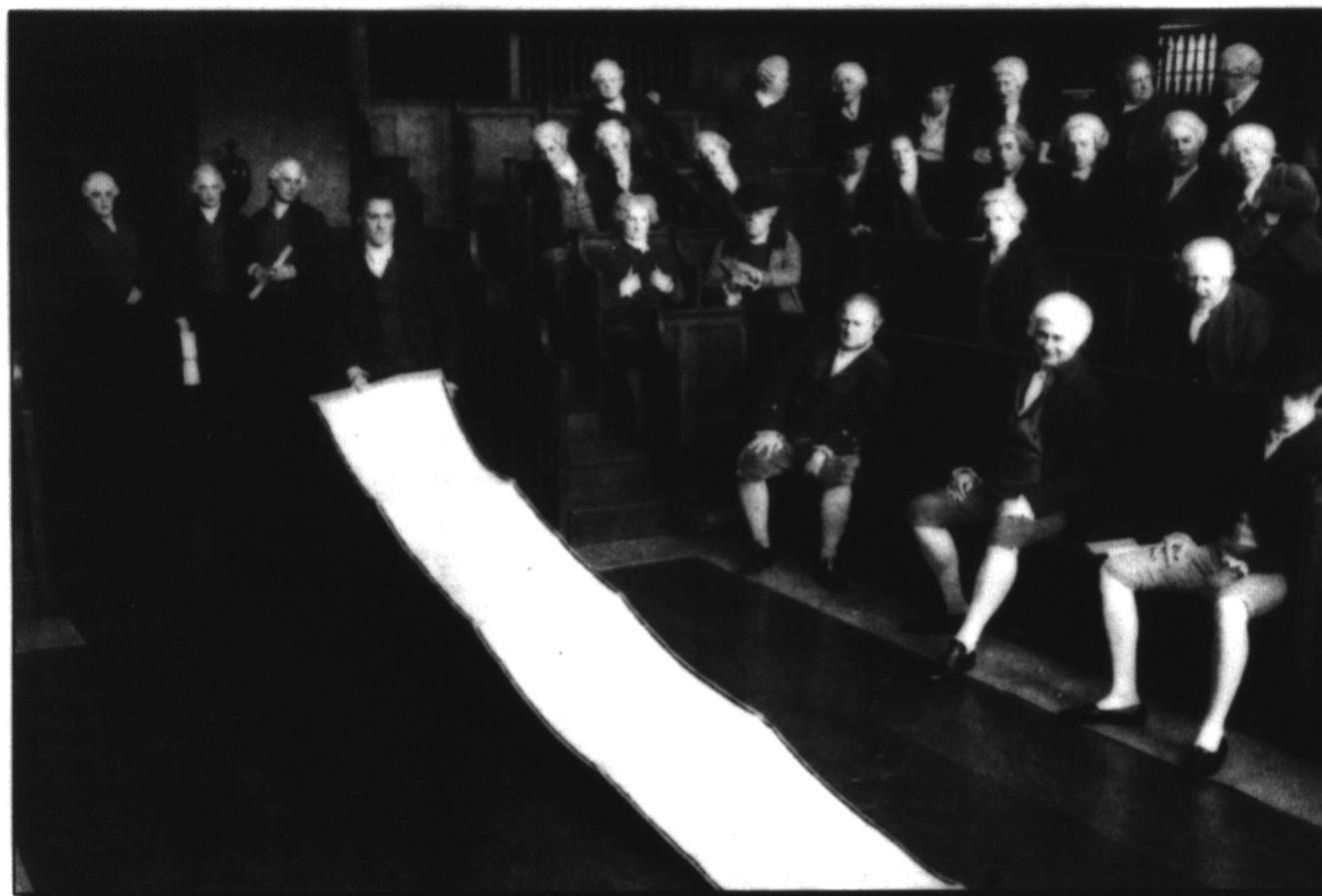
Amazing Grace is the story of Wilberforce, a devout Christian and member of the British Parliament who, beginning around 1787, sought to do what then seemed impossible — lead the British Empire to abolish the slave trade, what supporters called the lifeblood of the economy. He failed year after year until finally, in 1807, his bill became law and abolished an evil that had resulted in the enslavement and death of millions of Africans.

The movie, to be released Feb. 23 and rated PG for mild language, gets its name from Wilberforce's friendship with John Newton, the author of the hymn Amazing Grace and a former slave trader who, several years after becoming a Christian, teamed up with Wilberforce to abolish the trade.

Christian leaders today say the church could learn much from the way Wilberforce's faith drove him to moral action and kept him from giving up, despite obstacles.

"Anyone would be uplifted by seeing this movie, and people of faith should be inspired by it," said Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission in Nashville. He saw the movie at a January screening.

"I thought it was an excellent movie that shows what happens when a man of true faith takes seriously the command to be salt and light. Wilberforce should be an inspiration to every person of faith who takes seriously the obligation, responsibility and commission to make a difference in society," Land said.



FIGHTING SLAVERY — William Wilberforce, played by Ioan Gruffudd in the new movie Amazing Grace, shows Parliament a long list of signatures from people opposing the slave trade. The movie tells the story of Wilberforce's long fight against the slave trade, and his friendship with hymnist John Newton. (BP photo)

The parallels to the contemporary fight against abortion and the modern-day worldwide slave trade should not be overlooked, Land noted.

"You'd have to be deaf, dumb, and blind not to see the parallels between, first of all the abortion issue and slavery, and, second, the general condition of the culture then and now. As Secretary [of State Condoleezza] Rice stated when she spoke to the [Southern Baptist] Convention, slavery didn't end in the 19th century. It's still alive and well today — both sexual and non-sexual slavery," he pointed out.

"In many countries around the world, there is unfortunately a very lucrative and major trade in human flesh for sexual purposes and also for involuntary labor, and it must be stopped. I'm happy to be able to say that the United States has taken a lead in leading the international community to address this issue directly," Land said.

Born in 1759, Wilberforce graduated from St. John's College in Cambridge, where he became friends with William Pitt, the future prime minister. At the age of 21, he was elected as a member of Parliament, although by his own admission he did very little as an MP and was somewhat lazy. All that changed when, through the reading of the New Testament, Wilberforce became an evangelical and began searching for God's will for his life.

Wilberforce considered becoming a clergyman, but

Newton and others told him he could best serve God in Parliament, where he could have an impact on other legislators with his great oratory skills. Through the influence of Thomas Clarkson and other abolitionists, Wilberforce decided to use those skills to end the slave trade.

"So enormous, so dreadful, so irremediable did the trade's wickedness appear that my own mind was completely made up for abolition," he wrote. "Let the consequences be what they would, I from this time determined that I would never rest until I had effected its abolition."

Although Wilberforce's task at the outset seemed impossible — many argued the British economy would collapse if Wilberforce succeeded — by 1807, he was considered a hero. When his bill passed Parliament that year, MPs gave him a standing ovation.

Looking back

10 years ago

Mose Dangerfield, director of the Discipleship and Family Ministry Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, retires after 20 years of service with the MBCB.

20 years ago

A new Southern Baptist organization — the Southern Baptist Alliance — is formed to counter what leaders call a threat to the denomination's "historical principles, freedoms, and traditions." Leaders say the group will not field a candidate for SBC president.

60 years ago

Mississippi Baptists baptized 15,963 in 1955-56, according to Editor Joe T. Odle, with Second Church, Greenville, leading with 115 baptisms.



MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

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'Giants' now on DVD

Facing the Giants, the 2006 hit movie produced by Sherwood Church in Albany, Georgia, is now available at DVD retailers nationwide. Two versions are available, including the Special Collector's Edition, which features more than three hours of bonus material including a 28-minute making-of-the-movie feature. This version is available at Christian stores, including chains such as LifeWay, Family Stores, Parable, independent stores, and online Christian retailers. The regular edition DVD is available at Wal-Mart, Target, Best Buy, and other locations. Autographed footballs and autographed movie posters, signed by the stars of Facing the Giants, are available exclusively at Sherwood Church's website, along with many other movie items. The church will put the proceeds from these autographed items toward the community sports complex it is building with profits from the movie. The web site is <http://www.sherwoodbaptist.net/sherwoodpictures>. Along with its hard-copy release today, Facing the Giants is also available as an online download. ClickStar is making the movie available at their website, and when the movie is purchased there, a free download of the 28-minute making-of-the-movie feature will be available. ClickStar also provides a forum to talk with others about the film. To find out more or to download the movie, visit <http://www.clickstar.com/?campid=070130fgem1>. More than 2,000 churches, schools, and ministry groups have hosted Facing the Giants Movie Events. To host a public event featuring the film, visit <http://www.providentfilms.org/>

REACHING FOR THE
LOWEST STANDARDS

When kids start to school it does not take them long to learn that the learning process comes in various stages. Early on they discover that you can make a D and get by, a C and be clustered in the average group, a B and achieve more, or you can set your sights on an A and try to be excellent in your studies. Too often something happens either within the classroom, the child, or with the parents that causes a youngster to consistently shoot for the low standards. It is so prevalent in our society that it has often been referred to as the "dumbing down of America" as kids compete with each other to under-excel. While few if any parents will agree with the philosophy of studying less, not working as hard, but simply getting by, it has had a devastating effect on test scores across the nation. More importantly this philosophy can follow you through life. In fact, it seems as though this concept has become an unspoken but often adopted approach to mission support through the Cooperative Program.

For over 80 years the Cooperative Program has been the direct mission line from the pew to the most distant people groups on the planet. When you give through your church



Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

and your church supports missions through the Cooperative Program, a portion of every dollar you give touches every county in our state, every state in our country, and virtually every country on the globe with the Good News of Jesus. In years gone by many of our churches have looked at supporting the Cooperative Program with 10% of their undesignated gifts as a positive level of mission involvement. Of course, there are some who give much more than 10% and even up to 30% of their undesignated offerings, and there are some that give in the single digit percentages. In years gone by when everything was averaged our churches supported missions through the Cooperative Program beyond 10%.

Over the past decade a change has taken place that mirrors the kids reaching for the lowest standards. It is not unusual to receive a call from someone in the state wanting to know what is the average giving to the

Cooperative Program in our state or across the nation. At the present time the national average is somewhere around and probably just below six percent, while in Mississippi the average is just above nine percent. Following the discoveries by that investigation the line of reasoning is usually silent but real. It goes something like this. Our church is giving a much larger percentage than that, and since others are not doing any more that is probably a good place for us to cut the budget in order to have more for whatever personal or programmatic reasons may exist in our church. We can cut our mission giving, still do more than a lot of other people, and feel good about ourselves. There are some flaws in this reasoning that I think need to be brought to the discussion.

For one thing it should be kept in mind that giving to the Cooperative Program is not a competition, but it is a loving expression of God's call to tell the world of His love. It is not so much a look at what our



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RIGHT NOW!

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (I have sinned.)

2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)

3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)

4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.



Visit the Baptist Record online at www.mbc.org

MS POSITIONS

THE METRO BAPTIST ASSOCIATION is seeking resumes for the position of Associational Missions Director. Metro Association comprises Hinds and Madison counties. MBA has 82 churches and over 70,000 members. Resumes may be sent to: Search Committee; 6530 Dogwood View Parkway; Jackson, MS 39213. Deadline for receiving resumes is March 1, 2007.

FRANKLIN BAPTIST CHURCH is seeking a Pastor, Youth Minister and Music Minister. Send resume to 2222 Cox Ferry Rd., Flora MS 39071.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, PLANTERSVILLE, Miss., seeks a Part-time Youth Minister. Please submit resumes to First Baptist Church, P. O. Box 487, Plantersville, MS 38862, or email to fbaptist800@bellsouth.net.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, MADISON, Mississippi is seeking a senior pastor for its 2300 member congregation and multi-level staff. Please send resumes to: First Baptist Church, Attention: Glenn Holder, PO Box 400, Madison MS 39130-0400 or email gholder@fbcmadison.org.

NORTH MCCOMB BAPTIST CHURCH, McComb, Miss., is seeking an interim or part-time organist. Call (601) 684-5214 or send resume to Organist Search Committee, NMBC, 504 Laurel Street, McComb, MS 39652-2932. Resume should include Pastor's reference, contact information, and experience.

MT. LIBERTY BAPTIST CHURCH, Water Valley, Miss., is seeking a full-time minister. Please submit resume to search committee, 906 Stephens Street, Water Valley, MS 38965 or call Betty Melton (662) 473-2095.

IMMANUEL BAPTIST CHURCH in Vicksburg, Miss., is seeking individual or individuals to fill the following positions: minister of music and minister of youth. Any one that is interested, please send resume to Immanuel Baptist Church, attention personnel committee, 6949 Hwy 61 South, Vicksburg, MS 39180. Or contact Marshall Thomas at (601) 619-4905 or (601) 218-0392.

EPHESUS BAPTIST CHURCH IS SEEKING a full-time Minister of Youth and Recreation. Job requires working with youth and children and Scheduling Family Life Center events. Send resume to Dr. Jim Everett, 3495 Ephesus Road, Forest, MS 39074 or e-mail: jimincebc@earthlink.net.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, TAYLORSVILLE, Miss., is now accepting applications for a full-time youth minister. If you are interested please send resume to First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 357, Taylorsville, MS 39168, attn: search committee for youth minister.

SYLVARINA BAPTIST CHURCH is seeking a part-time Youth Minister. Please send resumes by mail to Sylvara Baptist Church, 1119 Old Sylvara Rd., Wesson, MS 39191.

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NORTH FLORIDA BEULAH BAPTIST Association looking for ministry minded Director of Missions focused on evangelism outreach, leadership training, benevolent outreach and local crisis ministries. Resumes to: Search Team, 189 NW Cali Drive, Lake City, FL 32055 by March 1, 2007.

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neighbor may be doing as it is a look at a world that is desperately in need of a Savior.

The second flaw that I would mention is how dangerous is this approach to life in general. In no other area of your life would you want to apply this principle. You do not want your kids to come home gloating that they made straight B's and therefore proved that they at least had a passing knowledge of the subject. No one wants to go to a doctor who proudly declares that he finished med school with almost a C+ average, and none of us wants to get on an airplane that for the past several months has had minimal or no maintenance. No! In reality, most of us look at every area of life and wish for and often times are driven toward excellence. The call of God, the mission of Jesus, and the ministry of your church both locally and around the world deserves and demands the best.

When Jesus came to earth to make provisions for our salvation, He did not look for the lowest standards. The opposite is true. He made no shortcuts and did all that was necessary in giving to see that you and I could have forgiveness of sin and life everlasting. That is the standard by which we are to live, give, and share with the world.

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HOECOMING

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Coffeyville, MS

STAFF CHANGES

1. **Gulfport Heights Church, Gulfport**, has called Stephen Lanier as pastor. He previously served Faith Church, Lena. He is a graduate of Pensacola Christian College and New Orleans Seminary.



2. Josh Neese has been called as youth director of **Tangipahoa Church** effective Feb. 18.



3. **Holcomb Church, Holcomb**, has called Bob Johnson as pastor. He has degrees from Crichton College (formerly Mid-South Bible College), Memphis, and from Mid-America Seminary, Memphis. He has pastored numerous churches in Alabama and Mississippi. He is shown with his wife Jackie and daughters, Audra and Courtney.

3. Johnson family

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MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

JUST FOR THE RECORD



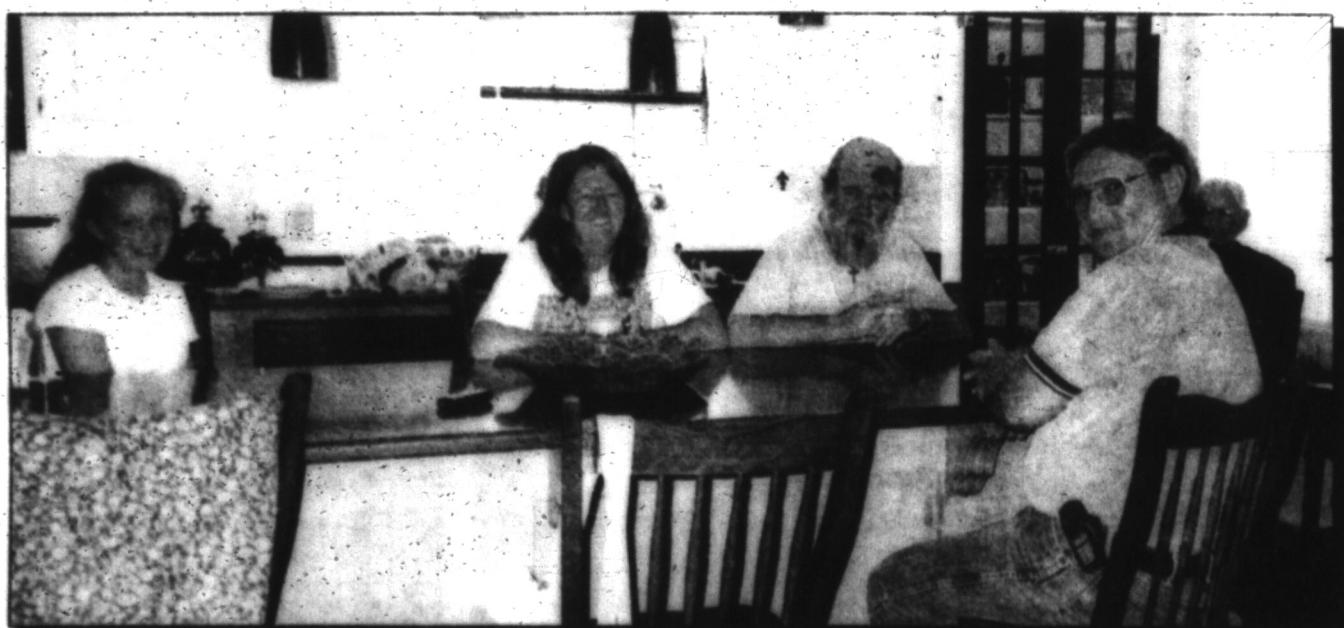
1. Deacons Recognized, Bethesda Church, Crawford



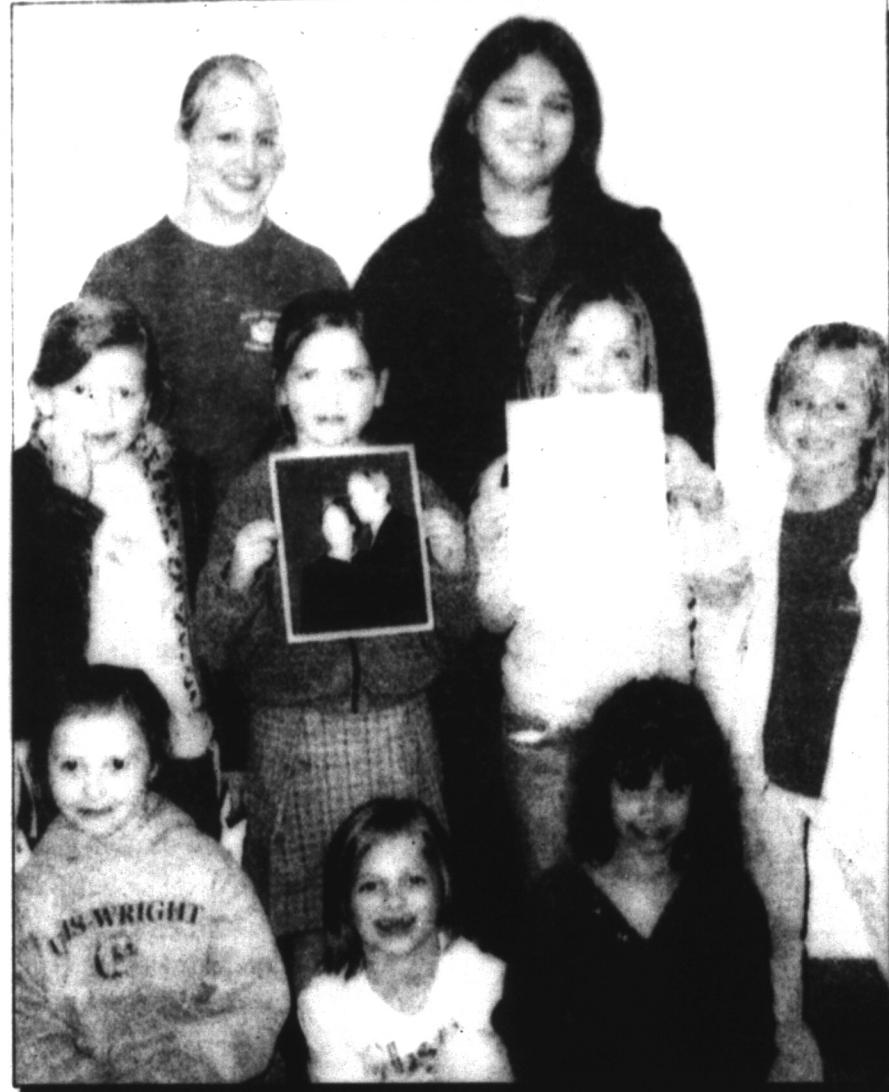
2. Christmas Program, Benton-Tippah Association



3. Deacon's Emphasis Week, N. Long Beach Church, Long Beach



4. Katrina Relief in Pearlington, Society Hill Church, Oakvale



5. GAs, First Church, Pascagoula

1. **Bethesda Church, Crawford**, recognized two deacons who had served for over 50 years Jan. 7. Shown are Merrill Gentry, pastor James W. Mills, and Bill Hayden.

2. The adults, children, and youth of **Concord Church, Benton-Tippah Association**, presented the Christmas program, The Friendly Beasts, Dec. 17. Shown are Regina Kuykendall and Emma Barkley, her granddaughter.

3. The deacons of **North Long Beach Church, Long Beach**, conducted the 11 a.m. worship service, planning and participating in each part of the service, in recognition of deacon's emphasis week. Shown are pastor Charles Bonner, Richard Bazzell, Doug Thigpen, O.B. Hillman, Otis Beech, Robert Hester, and Kevin Byrd.

4. **Society Hill Church, Oakvale**, began work building a house in January, 2006, for the Ben and Sue Taylor family, Pearlington. Whitesand, Seminary, Williamsburg, and Cold Springs churches joined in the project. The house is now completed. Shown are Carrie Dyess, Sue Taylor, Mackey Pierce, Ben Taylor, and Otto Polk.

5. The GAs of **First Church, Pascagoula**, recently wrote President George W. Bush letters, sharing their prayers and encouragement. They received a letter from Bush along with a photo of him and Laura Bush Dec. 15. Front row, Rian Black, Brittany Tivet, and Alexis Phelps; second row, Cari Corser, Holiday Garrison, Mary Thomas Boulton, and Mali Cunningham; back row, Anna Laurin Harrison and Anna Ehlers.

6. The children of **Antioch Church, Brandon**, promoted the Lottie Moon Christmas

Offering by placing ornaments on the Christmas tree. The goal was \$1,500 and the offering reached \$5,000.

7. The Covington-Jefferson Davis Association chain saw team responded to the ice storm disaster in Oklahoma and provided help Jan. 22-27. This was the team's first disaster response. The team, MSCS-25, completed 13 jobs during the week for needy neighbors by safely removing limbs from roofs, clearing limbs across fences, and clearing limbs from yards.

8. **Utica Church, Utica**, will sponsor a Winter Bible Study Feb. 16-18, 6 p.m., with Harold Bryson leading the study on 1 John. Ben James, pastor.

9. **Sunrise Church, Leake County**, is hosting a men and boys wild game supper Mar. 1, 6:30 p.m. Wildlife enthusiast Melvin Thingle is the guest speaker. For more information, call (601) 267-2225 or 267-4156.

10. **Cedar View Church, Olive Branch**, is hosting a community singing with the Low Note Duo Feb. 17, 6 p.m.



6. Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, Antioch Church, Brandon



THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST FOUNDATION

Mississippi Baptist Foundation, P. O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205 or call 800-748-1652 or 601-292-3210

Spring 2007



Investing for Your Church

Daniel Hall
Executive Director
Mississippi Baptist Foundation

Recorded in Matthew 25 is the parable of the talents. You'll recall that a particular man offered specific sums of money to three different individuals and charged each one to be good stewards of the resources entrusted to their care. Two of the men invested the money wisely and realized a return on their investment that doubled the original amount. The third man, however, chose to dig a hole and bury his master's money.

Upon the master's return, the first two men presented their lord with an accounting of their investment activity and the large profit that had been achieved. To each of these men, the master enthusiastically proclaimed, *"Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness."*

When the third man entered into his master's presence, however, his report was not as glowing. In fact, this man's report was met with a less than favorable response as the master chastised him as a *"wicked, lazy servant!"* This third man missed out on a wonderful opportunity to be a blessing to his master and to receive a blessing from his master.

By planning wisely, you can take the gifts that God has provided your church and increase them. This principle is illustrated in the Parable of the Talents. Questions that you and your church may ask are: 1) *Is your church being the best steward of its investments?* 2)

How can you best plan for your church's future?

3) *How can you have a lasting impact for Christ in your community and around the world?* If these are some of the questions that your church is asking, then the Mississippi Baptist Foundation can help.

For more than 60 years, Mississippi Baptist churches and institutions have entrusted the growth of their funds to the Mississippi Baptist Foundation. At the Foundation, we want to help each church maximize their gifts. For instance, Mr. and Mrs. Smith want to leave the church \$10,000 in their will to help meet the ongoing needs of the Sunday School ministry at their church. And, while a one time gift of this nature will have a significant impact, these same monies placed in an endowment trust with the Mississippi Baptist Foundation will provide a perpetual source of funds for the church's ministry until our Lord returns. In addition, such an arrangement can provide a lasting memorial to which family members can contribute as a continual means of honoring parents and loved ones.

Throughout this newsletter, you will read about some of the investment options that are available to you and your church. In addition, you'll find information about the free seminars that the Mississippi Baptist Foundation offers to churches and their members. The Foundation looks forward to partnering with you and your church as a "laborer together with God" as we anticipate the glorious affirmation *"Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!"*



Our Ministry

The Mississippi Baptist Foundation serves as the trust agency of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, offering a means whereby Mississippi Baptists can provide perpetual support for Mississippi Baptist and Southern Baptist causes until our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ returns.

As the trust agency of the Convention, the Mississippi Baptist Foundation promotes Christian estate stewardship and receives, invests, and manages endowment gifts. Additionally, the Foundation distributes earnings from these endowments to many Baptist ministries. In essence, the Mississippi Baptist Foundation serves as a money-management partner for Mississippi Baptist churches, institutions, and agencies. The Mississippi Baptist Foundation ministers under the direction of a Board of Trustees elected by the Mississippi Baptist Convention and the Foundation receives primary funding through a Cooperative Program allocation. As a Mississippi Baptist agency, the Mississippi Baptist Foundation desires to advance the goal of "helping bring Mississippi and the World to Jesus."



Our Foundation Trustees

Seated from left: Solon Smith, Vice-President, First Baptist Church Greenville; Barry Hardy, President, Broadmoor Baptist Church Madison; Ronald D. Logan, Treasurer, Ridgecrest Baptist Church Madison; Nikki Fletcher, Secretary, Pinelake Baptist Church Brandon; Standing from left: Cathy Freeman, New Prospect Baptist Church Lafayette County; Fred Porter, First Baptist Church Meridian; Gary Blair, First Baptist Church Brookhaven; Doug Hassell, First Baptist Church Vicksburg; Dan Wynn, First Baptist Church Natchez; Paul Breazeale, First Baptist Church Jackson; J. Kearney Travis, First Baptist Church Hattiesburg; (not pictured: Ed Jones, First Baptist Church Pascagoula)

OUR GOALS

- To maximize God-given resources intended for the perpetual support of Baptist ministries through good stewardship of the assets entrusted to the Mississippi Baptist Foundation;
- To be a resource for Mississippi Baptists for estate stewardship information and assistance
- To encourage every adult Mississippi Baptist to have a Last Will and Testament and to favor Baptist causes with at least a tithe of their estate;
- To provide money-management services for Mississippi Baptist churches, institutions, and agencies;
- To offer unsurpassed Christian service in an effort to benefit Kingdom ministries through enhanced donor relations.

Stewardship Promotion Seminars Offered

THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST FOUNDATION PROMOTES ESTATE STEWARDSHIP BY OFFERING THREE GENERAL SEMINARS. The format of each seminar is appropriate for Discipleship Training sessions, group luncheons, and other gatherings. Please call the Mississippi Baptist Foundation to schedule one of the following seminars.

WILL SEMINAR

This seminar features a discussion of the Last Will and Testament with emphasis on the importance of establishing a valid will in Mississippi, the probate process, estate taxes, property ownership, and gifts to advance Kingdom ministries.

INVESTMENT SEMINAR

The Investment Seminar provides an overview of the concept of risk vs. return, the importance of asset allocation, and the various classes of assets that are compatible with investment objectives.

FINANCIAL GIFTS SEMINAR

Participants in this seminar will learn of the tax advantages of charitable gifts and the methods for establishing these gifts.

Discussion centers on outright gifts, gifts of appreciated property, insurance gifts, and life income gifts such as the charitable remainder trust, gift annuity, and the pooled income fund.

THE FOUNDATION ASSISTS INDIVIDUALS WHO DESIRE TO MAKE A GIFT, GENERALLY AN ENDOWMENT OR A LIFE INCOME GIFT, to any Mississippi Baptist or Southern Baptist cause or mission. Not only does the Mississippi Baptist Foundation provide information to prospective donors and their advisors, but the Foundation often also serves as Trustee of the gift. Life income gifts include the Gift Annuity, Charitable Remainder Trust, Pooled Income Fund, and Charitable Lead Trust.

GIFT ANNUITY

A Gift Annuity is a contract representing an irrevocable exchange of a gift of cash or securities for a guaranteed, fixed income each year for the life of the donor. Upon the donor's death, the remaining funds are distributed to a Baptist cause in accordance with the donor's wishes. While gift annuity rates are set by the individual charitable

organization, these rates generally conform to the rates published by the American Council of Gift Annuities.

CHARITABLE REMAINDER TRUSTS

A Charitable Remainder Trust is an irrevocable trust in which a donor places cash, securities, or other property while retaining a specified income for life or other defined period of years. Upon completion of the trust's duration, the remaining assets are distributed to Baptist causes or mission opportunities as determined by the donor in the trust agreement. Charitable Remainder Trusts take the form of an Annuity Trust or a Unitrust.

POOLED INCOME FUND

The Pooled Income Fund accepts gifts from many donors, "pools" these funds together for investment purposes, and distributes the Fund's earned income quarterly on a proportional basis to all participants. When the last named income beneficiary of a gift dies, the portion of the Fund's principal associated with the gift is distributed to the specified Baptist cause.

MBF Investment Funds

The Mississippi Baptist Foundation operates two highly diversified common investment funds. The Mississippi Baptist Foundation employs the services of professional money managers for both the MBF Equity Fund and the MBF Fixed Income Fund. These managers assist with ongoing decisions regarding the optimal portfolio of stocks and bonds that will help meet investment objectives.

The MBF Equity Fund utilizes the services of four different money managers each following a different style or discipline. The Investment Committee of the Mississippi Baptist Foundation's Board of Trustees regularly monitors the performance of each individual money manager.

Performance MBF Equity Fund

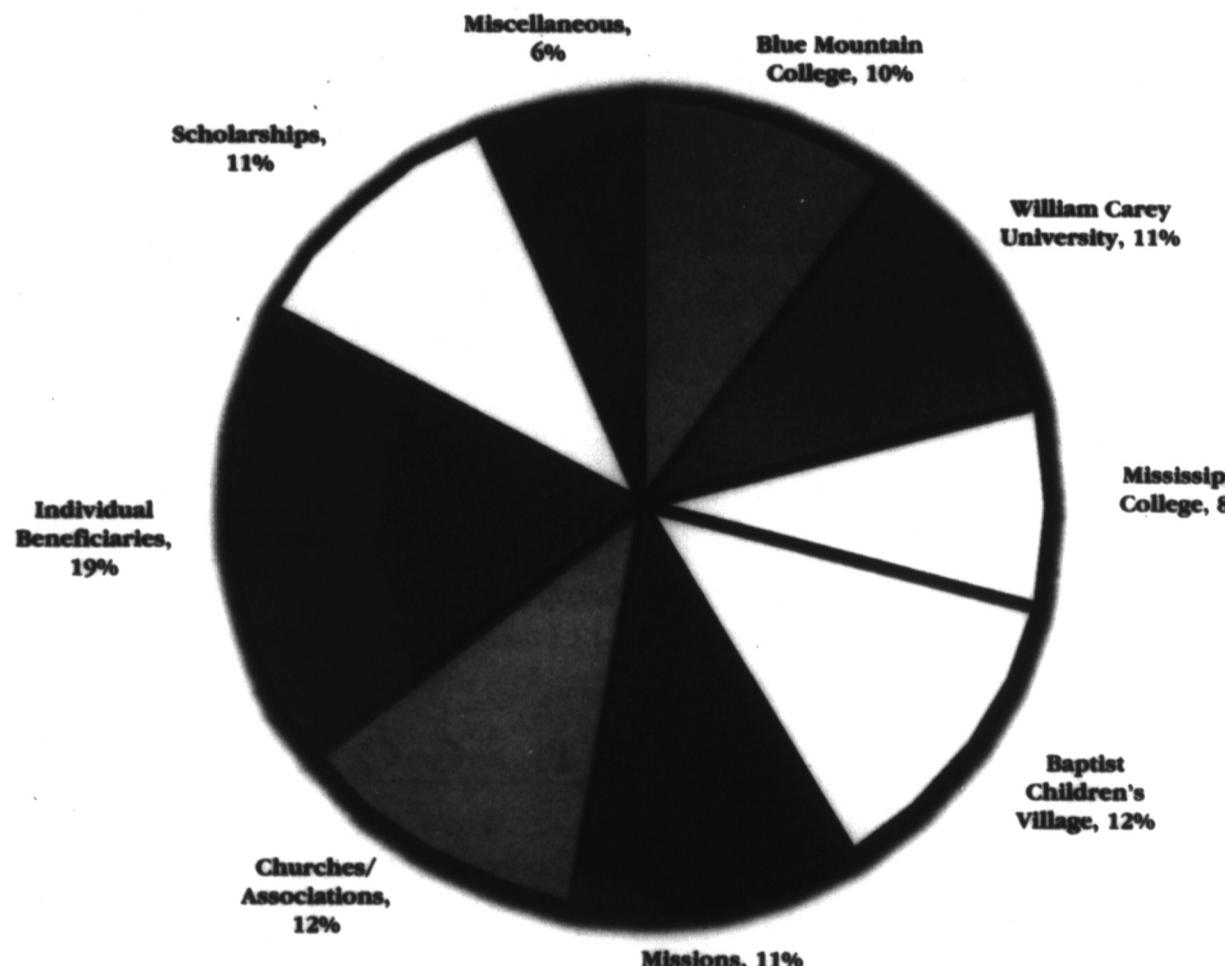
| Inception | 5 year | 3 year | 1 year |
|-----------|--------|--------|--------|
| 10.15% | 9.69% | 11.69% | 14.28% |

The MBF Fixed Income Fund utilizes three different managers. The Investment Committee of the Mississippi Baptist Foundation's Board of Trustees regularly monitors the performance of each individual fixed income manager.

Performance MBF Fixed Income Fund

| Inception | 5 year | 3 year | 1 year |
|-----------|--------|--------|--------|
| 6.30% | 5.25% | 3.44% | 5.82% |

By using the common investment fund approach, the Mississippi Baptist Foundation is able to offer very well diversified investments to any size account. The trust accounting software employed by the Mississippi Baptist Foundation makes the proper administration of these common funds possible.



The funds managed by the Mississippi Baptist Foundation support many ministries. The chart above gives a summary of our work for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2006.

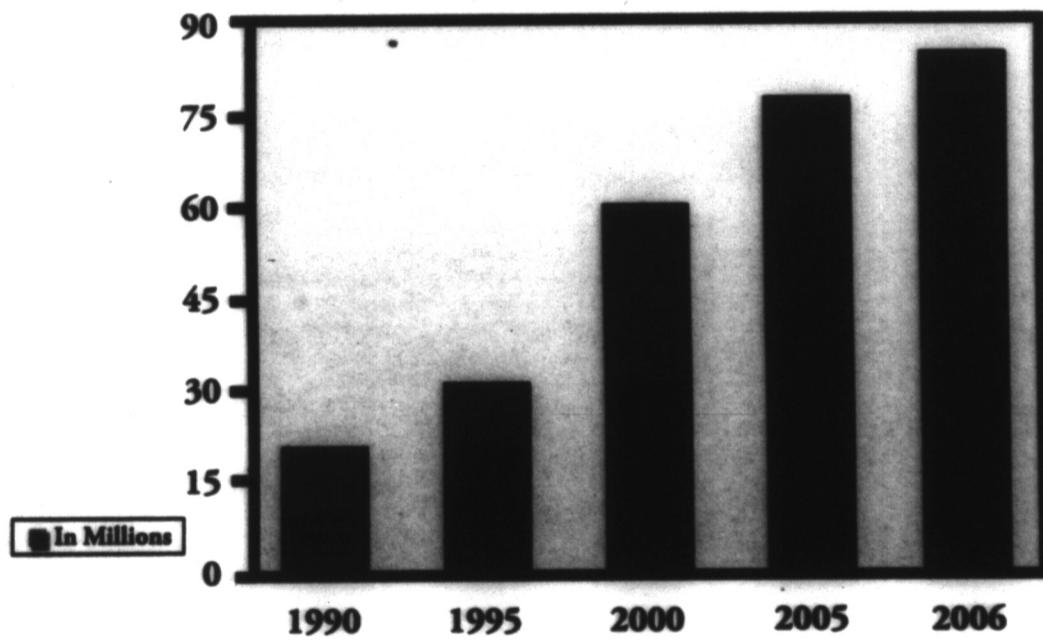
**Year ending 12/31/06*

Money Management Services Provided for Churches, Institutions, Agencies and Foundation Accounts

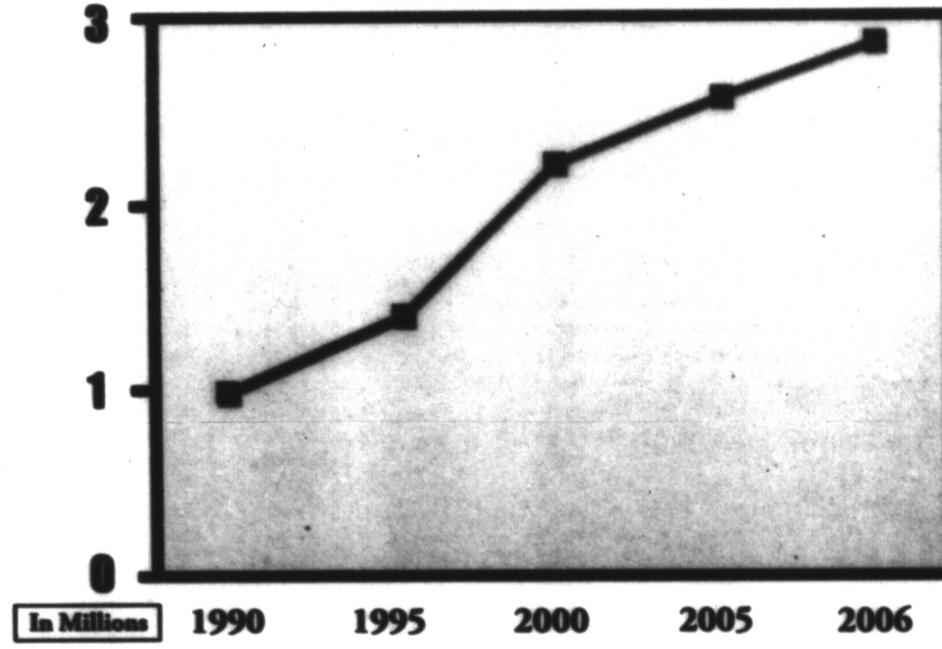
The Mississippi Baptist Foundation provides money management services for Mississippi Baptist churches, institutions, agencies, and other Foundation accounts. Available Foundation investment services include the following:

- **MBF Equity Fund** – This growth stock fund is designed for capital appreciation with little emphasis on income. Invested in stock offerings of U.S. and international corporations, this fund is managed by four outside professional money managers.
- **MBF Fixed Income Fund** – This bond fund is designed to produce income with little attention given to capital appreciation. This fund is invested in U.S. government securities and corporate bonds by three outside professional money managers.
- **MBF Short Term Cash Fund** – This fund is a money market-type fund which is designed to out-perform both the current yields associated with six and twelve month certificates of deposits and the 91-day Treasury bill rate. With this approach, the Short-Term Cash Fund matches a competitive rate of return with full liquidity. This fund is managed by the Southern Baptist Foundation.
- **MBF General Endowment Fund** – This fund is designed to address the long term investment objectives of perpetual endowment accounts. The Endowment Fund seeks to provide income while guarding against the effects of inflation. The Endowment Fund is invested in stocks and bonds according to a preset allocation. *The current investment allocation of the Endowment Fund is 30% in the MBF Equity Fund and 70% in the MBF Fixed Income Fund.*

Assets Under Management



Total Distributions



The Mississippi Baptist Foundation's assets have grown substantially over the past 15 years from \$18.1 million in 1990 to \$84.5 million in 2006. The graphs above show our asset growth along with our increase in income distribution.



THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST FOUNDATION

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New IMB workers take field after appointment service

HIGHLANDS, Calif. (BP) — While walking in a small town in Thailand years ago, Richard Blount spotted some Buddhists entering a temple and sensed his first heart-tug for missions.

"I witnessed several Thais bowing down, lighting incense and praying to a big, gold Buddha," he recalled. "I thought how fruitless these people seeking hope in an idol. It was then that God began to burden my heart for the Thai people."

Blount and his wife Linda were two of 43 new Southern Baptist missionaries appointed January 31 at Immanuel Church in Highland, California. The event drew a crowd of 2,200 people as part of the International Mission Board (IMB) trustee meeting and Immanuel's Global Outreach Celebration.

The outreach celebration was designed to personalize missions with the help of an additional 45 missionaries on site to share their experiences.

Rob Zinn, senior pastor at the church, thanked all the missionaries for following God's call to the mission field. "Trust me when I say that the Kingdom of God is grateful for your obedience. The world will be grateful for your obedience... and what God is going to do through your life."

IMB President Jerry Rankin, a Mississippi native and graduate of Baptist-affiliated Mississippi College in Clinton, noted the diversity and various backgrounds of the new missionaries. "Yet, there is one thing [you] all have in common," he said. "Someone touched your life

with the witness about Jesus Christ... and the Great Commission became very personal. You're bringing the skills, the experience, the education, all that God has put into your life to focus on the one thing of significance — God's glory among the nations."

One missionary, born a Hindu in Bangladesh, shared during the service how another missionary impacted his life when he had no other way of hearing the Gospel. "From that day I became a follower of Jesus," he said. "Afterward, God used [my wife and me] to share and lead many people to Christ in Bangladesh as well [as] in the United States."

The couple now plans to share the Good News with people in South Asia.

Another missionary, headed to Russia, told how the Lord revealed a call to missions while he was sharing the short story, The Missing Missionary, with a group of boys at church. "Before the end of the story, God had revealed to me the identity of the missing missionary," he said. "It was me."

During the event, trustees, missionaries, and visitors heard updates on how God is working around the world. Among the highlights:

- More than 17,000 South Koreans attended a missions event to learn how they can impact global evangelism.
- In the past two months, IMB spent more than one million dollars on hunger relief and development projects. Some of the projects focused on



ANSWERING THE CALL — International Mission Board appointees line the altar of Immanuel Church in Highland, California, at the end of the appointment service on Jan. 31. Board President Jerry Rankin, a Mississippi native, offered a prayer of dedication for the 43 new missionaries. (BP photo by Bill Bangham)

the HIV/AIDS pandemic, while others were aimed at rebuilding areas impacted by disasters and crisis situations.

Rankin later challenged the new missionaries to look beyond simply going to the mission field. Missionaries must first "look, love and live," he said.

Pulling from all four Gospels in the New Testament, Rankin contended that one of the most important commands Jesus

Christ gave His followers was "to look." In the fourth chapter of John, Rankin noted these words of Jesus, "Look unto the fields, lift up your eyes and look unto the fields that are white already unto harvest."

"You've got to lift up your eyes, open your eyes and look and see a lost world," Rankin said. "[Missionaries must] see a world as God sees it... and the potential harvest."

Jesus also commanded His followers to love, Rankin said.

When the Pharisees asked Jesus what the greatest commandment was, Jesus responded, "To love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy mind, and thy soul," Rankin pointed out, but Christ quickly added that they also should love their neighbor as they love themselves.

COLLEGE NEWS

1. The **Mississippi College** Speech and Debate Team placed all four of its competitors in the elimination rounds at the "Bicker Debates" on the campus of the University of Louisiana in Monroe on February 3-4. The team's accomplishment is particularly impressive considering it was three of the four's 1st or 2nd collegiate debate tournament. Participants included Chase Porter, Kate Russell, Jessica Bates, and Josh McCormick.
2. Miroslav Loncar, artist in residence and professor of guitar at **William Carey University**, published Six Croatian Dances, a collection of easy music for four guitars from a nine country series by Les Productions D'Oz. The book is available from the online music retailers, guitar-gallerymusic.com; gspguitar.com; and productionsd0z.com.

3. Stacy Reeves, professor of education at **William Carey University**, shared education and culture with 65 elementary education majors at Linyi University in China recently. After meeting the director of foreign affairs on a trip to China in June 2006, Reeves was invited to teach at the university. The students of Linyi University hung a welcome banner in Reeves' honor and gave her an award in recognition of her work with them.

4. The **William Carey University** theatre will bring to life The Wind in the Willows by Kenneth Grahame, freely adapted for the stage by Moses Goldberg, March 1 and 2 at 7 p.m. and March 3 at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. in the O.L. Quave Theatre on the Hattiesburg campus. This is the 30th year that Carey's children's show is co-sponsored by the Hattiesburg Arts Council. Tickets are \$4 and the box office is open from 1 p.m. until 4 p.m. daily beginning Feb. 26. Call 601-318-6221 for information or reservations.

5. Abbie Hall of Wiggins has been chosen a 2007 William Winter Scholar and will represent **William Carey University** at the 18th annual Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration. This award winning conference will take place Feb. 22-25. It is sponsored by Copiah-Lincoln Community College, Natchez National Historical Park, Mississippi Department of Archives and History and Mississippi Public Broadcasting. The public is invited to attend the events, many of which are admission free. For more information call (601) 446-1289 or (866) 296-6522 for more information. The website is www.colin.edu/nlcc.



4. Reeves honored in China, WCU



Bivo ministers, wives meet in Tupelo retreat

By Ken Cook
Correspondent

Mississippi Baptist bivocational ministers and their wives participated in a time of worship, praise, encouragement, affirmation, inspiration, challenge, and fellowship during the Bivocational Ministers and Wives Retreat in Tupelo on the first two days of December 2006.

Dale Holloway, bivocational specialist in the Pastor/Leadership Development Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, reminded participants that the Lord God knows exactly what is happening in each life, in each family, and in each church — and that is it He who empowers and performs His will through His willing servants.

Devotions and/or testimonies were given by Marty Merritt, pastor of Palestine Church, Union County Association; Waymon Betts, pastor of Van Fleet Church, Chicksaw Association; and Jesse Massey, pastor of Unity Church, Tishomingo Association.

Congregational singing was led by Tracy Taylor, interim music minister at First Church, Verona. Special music was presented by the Unity Trio (Chuck Clark, J.C. Johnson, and Casey Johnson) of Iuka.

Four seminars were offered to retreat participants. Ronald Meeks, associate professor of Bible at Baptist-affiliated Blue Mountain College in Blue Mountain, presented How to Prepare Better Sermons with Limited Time. P.J. Scott, interim pastor of First Church, Ripley, and leader of the Ministry of Reaching and Encouragement (MORE), presented Effective Growth in the Church Through Sunday School.

Betty Scott, also with MORE, offered sessions entitled Partners Assisting the Lord's Servants. Kenny Digby, missions director for Alcorn Association in Corinth, presented Developing Leadership Through Discipleship.

A special highlight was a time of prayer in small groups at the conclusion of the Friday

evening session. "This whole conference has been one of the best that I have been to," said one participant.

A further special event was the presentation of resources and door prizes. Ken Pollack, pastor of Mt. Vernon Church, Lee Association, was the recipient of a 20-inch flat screen television. "This is the first new television we have had in 15 or so years. Thank you," he said.

Funds for the door prizes were furnished by Harmony Church in Graceville, Florida. Harmony's pastor, Raymond O'Quinn, is a bivocational minister leader in that state.

Johnny Rakestraw, pastor of First Church, Hickory Flat, provided the final sermon of the retreat. He encouraged bivocationalists to see the Lord, hear the Lord, and respond to the Lord's call by relying always on the promise of Jesus that He is with them always as they are ministering and making disciples.

Near the conclusion of the retreat and just prior to the prayer of thanksgiving to God

for the luncheon prepared by volunteers from Auburn Church, Tupelo, Mark Howard, missions director for Lee Association in Tupelo, said, "On behalf of the Mississippi Council on Bivocational Ministries, I thank all the volunteers for their efforts in hosting this retreat. Each one has gone way beyond and above in ministering to our every need."

The retreat was funded by the Mississippi Cooperative Program through the Pastor/Leadership Development Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. The retreat and banquet were hosted by Lee Association and Auburn Church.

Bivocational specialist Holloway said plans are already underway for the 2007 Bivocational Ministers. The location and date are to be announced.

Cook is a member of the Mississippi Council on Bivocational Ministries. He is a member of First Church, Brandon.

Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx, 1932 - 2004
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GUXTI VQ KJQXQBNXQ,
ULC RXUC USGUVD, KJUK
VQ WUV MQ
UTTNOLKQC GNXKJV KN
QDTURQ USS KJQDQ
KJHLZD KJUK DJUSS
TNWQ KN RUDD, ULC
KN DKULC MQBNXQ KJQ
DNL NB WUL.

SOFQ KGQLKV-NLQ:

KJHXKV-DHP

Clue: K = T

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: John Seventeen:Twenty-Five.

Analysis: Bivos are heroes

By Jon Cook
Correspondent

All of the men sitting before me worked two jobs. Among them were carpenters, salesmen, factory workers, and teachers — and all of them were pastors.

They were a few of the several hundred bivocational pastors in the state of Mississippi. They were meeting for a weekend retreat to get some much needed encouragement and appreciation. It was my privilege to stand before them and tell them they are loved, respected, and admired. They work so hard to keep all of their plates spinning, "do their work heartily as for God, rather than for man," and meet the needs of the flock that God has entrusted to them.

Many of them have a desire to pastor full-time. What I wanted them to understand is that, in my opinion, all of them do pastor full-time. Whether it is standing in the pulpit preaching three times a week, visiting a church member in the hospital on their way home from work, or doing whatever God has equipped them to do in the workplace, they pastor wherever they go.

All of us who do have the special privilege of getting paid a full-time salary for the ministry we perform need to respect and pray for our bivo-

cational brothers. We tend to take for granted the blessing of focusing on our paid ministry all the time and forget that our bivocational brothers have to honor God in the workplace and earn a living there while pastoring at the same time.

These men do the same work we do with limited time and resources. They often pastor small churches with great needs.

They are heroes; men I admire. They get it. They not only understand what it is to pastor a church, but they also realize the potential for ministry in the workplace. They live in both worlds everyday!

If you get up every morning and head for the church house instead of the factory or sales call, let me encourage you to find a bivocational pastor and befriend him. Build a relationship that blesses him. Find out how you can help and serve him. Pray for him and with him.

Not only will it bless him, but it will bless you as you begin to understand the workplace from his point of view.

Jon Cook, director of pastor and church relations for FCCI/Christ@Work (<http://www.fcci.org>), attended the Bivocational Ministers and Wives Retreat in Tupelo in December 2006. He may be contacted at jonc@fcci.org. Reprinted by permission.



Cook

EVANGELISM BIBLE CONFERENCE 2007
JAMES E. MESSER MINISTRIES

First Baptist Church Purvis

Bill Wright, Pastor • 601-794-8551
77 Shelby Speights Dr • Purvis, MS 39475

Sunday 2/18 thru Wednesday 2/21
8:00/10:30am & 5:30pm Sun • 7:00pm M - W

• Scheduled Speakers •

Sunday 8:00 & 10:30am • Jim McNeil • Evangelist
St. Louis, Missouri

Sunday 5:30pm • Emir Caner • Dean
The College at Southwestern • Former Muslim

Monday 7:00pm • Junior Hill • Evangelist
Hartselle, Alabama

Tuesday 7:00pm • Jimmy Jackson • Pastor
Whitesburg Baptist Church • Huntsville, Alabama

Wednesday 7:00pm • Ted Traylor • Pastor
Olive Baptist Church, Pensacola, Florida

Special Music • 5:00pm Sun & 6:30pm M - W

Phil Willis and Sons of the Father

Music Director • Phil Willis

Music Evangelist • Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Children's Worship Service

Sunday thru Wednesday - Under the Direction of
Dean & Gayna Forrest

FREE LUNCH 11:45am - 12:55pm M - W
with Evangelist James Messer

UPCOMING 2007 BIBLE CONFERENCES

July 15-18 FBC Batesville - Batesville, MS
Aug 12-15 Salem Heights Baptist - Laurel, MS
Oct 7-10 Smith County Association - Raleigh, MS
Oct 21-24 FBC Ocean Springs - Ocean Springs, MS

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GOD AND GOVERNMENT



By Jimmy Porter

Each day I look out my office window and see two buildings.

One is the First Baptist Church of Jackson where people go to worship God, and the other is the Mississippi State Capitol where legislators gather to govern our state. Seeing these two buildings in a single glance raises two questions, not only for me but for all of us. First, "Does the legislative session at the Capitol affect the lives of the people in the church?" and secondly, "Should the people in the church be concerned and involved in the legislative process taking place at the Capitol?" The answers are "yes" and "yes." But it has been said, "Never talk to your friends about religion or politics because if you do, both of you will end up mad." Therefore, many in the Christian community take these words to heart and do not allow their religion to influence their politics. They will not allow themselves to say, "God" and "government" in the same breath.

On the other side of the aisle are men like James Dobson of Focus on the Family who say, "We live in a representative form of government where we are its leaders. It means that every citizen has a responsibility to participate in the decisions that are made, and that includes people of faith using their influ-

ence for what is moral and just. The Reverend Billy Graham, Evangelist, has suggested that we are to elect individuals to public office who will allow their religious convictions to guide them in the decision-making process.

The biblical writer acknowledged an obligation to both God and government when he recorded Christ's instruction to "render therefore unto Caesar the things which be Caesar's and unto God the things which be God's (Luke 20:25). The Apostle Paul in Romans 13:1-7 instructs the Christian community to submit to the ruling authorities. He states, "For there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God." Human government is God ordained and is needed because of human rebellion, lawlessness, and transgression. An absence of government would create an unhealthy condition like it was in Judges 21:25 where it says, "In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as he saw fit."

It is quite clear that Christians are expected to be good citizens. A good citizen is an involved citizen. Matthew 5:13-16 commands Christians to be "salt" of the earth and the "light" of the world. The presence of salt in food and light in the midst of darkness is quite noticeable. There were no segments of society exempted from this mandate therefore "... as American citizens we have the right to be involved in the public and legislative arena. As obedient

Christians, we have the responsibility to be involved," states Richard Land, President of The Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission.

In order to fulfill our civic and Christian responsibilities, we must register to vote. The U.S. Census Bureau asserts that 25 to 35 percent of eligible Americans are not registered to vote. The Family Research Council states in "Why Christians Should Vote" that only one out of four eligible evangelical Christians voted in the 2000 election. Of 59 million potential evangelical voters, 24 million of them were not registered to vote and then only 20 million of the 35 million who registered actually went out and voted. Also we must be informed of the issues and become familiar with the candidates running for office, not only as to who they are but as to where they stand on issues that are important to the Christian community.

The year 2007 looms large as we elect individuals to public office who will guide our country and state for the next several years. My prayer is that men and women who are willing to allow their religious convictions to guide them as they govern will be selected for these most important tasks. And the only way for this prayer to become a reality is for Mississippi Baptist to allow Christian values and biblical principles dictate their vote.

Jimmy Porter is executive director of the Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission.

Colt's Tony Dungy proud to win 'the Lord's way'

MIAMI (BP) — Tony Dungy closed out a soggy night riding the back of his players with his fists clinched, pointing to the sky, after his Indianapolis Colts captured Super Bowl XLI, 29-17, over the Chicago Bears Sunday night in Miami.

Dungy again used his nationally televised platform to give glory to God during the post-game awards ceremony.

In the awards ceremony in Dolphin Stadium, CBS announcer Jim Nantz asked Dungy to comment on the significance of being the first African American head coach to lead a team to a Super Bowl victory. "I'm proud to be representing African American coaches," Dungy said. "... It means an awful lot to our country."

Dungy continued: "More than anything — and I've said it before — [Chicago coach] Lovie Smith and I [are] not only the first two African-Americans, but Christian coaches, showing that you can win doing it the Lord's way," Dungy told Nantz while holding the Vince Lombardi Trophy given to each year's NFL champion, "and we're more proud of that."

Dungy and Smith — whom Dungy hired when he was with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers — spent much of the week leading up to the Super Bowl talking about the source of their strength and explaining that one win or loss would not define them as a person.

To hear Dungy give a testimony to his personal faith in Jesus Christ at the biggest of television venues

came as little surprise to those who know him best.

"Tony Dungy is going to be the same way all the time, win or lose," Colts chaplain Ken Johnson said. "God is going to get glory in all situations and He always will with Tony."

After Monday's victory parade in Indianapolis and wrapping up some office details, Dungy will return to Tampa for a brief period to rest, spend time with his family and worship in his home church.

He said he will ask his family members again, as he does each year, if he should continue coaching the Colts, but with one year left on his Indianapolis contract, he expects to return. He said at the Athletes in Action Super Bowl Breakfast that he remains in coaching mainly because of the positive effect he can have on players' lives and the public platform he has for sharing his testimony.

"I think God's way is the best way," he said during one of his pre-Super Bowl news conferences, "and I appreciate the opportunity to share."

In Tampa, where Dungy continues to have ties to Idlewild Church, pastor Ken Whitten noted that "Tony Dungy made the Indianapolis Colts very happy, but he made the entire body of Christ happy when he accepted the Lombardi Trophy and gave the credit to the Lord Jesus Christ."

"Tony Dungy is the type of church member every pastor would like to have," Whitten said. "It was great for him to show God's way as a coach."



TOP OF THE WORLD — Tony Dungy, atop his players' shoulders, celebrates the Indianapolis Colts' 29-17 Super Bowl XLI win over the Chicago Bears. Moments later before a national TV audience, Dungy said he was proud above all for "doing it the Lord's way." (BP photo by Bob Carey)

THE VILLAGE VIEW



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GIFTS OF HONOR AND MEMORY

A portion of The Village View is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful, and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

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BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

Like Father, Like Son

John 5:17-23, 38-42, 46-47



Lofton

By Gloria Lofton

We are continuing our study on Christianity is Christ. This week's lesson title is: Like Father, Like Son. Many people try to separate God (the Father) from Jesus. Some see God as a mean and angry deity and Jesus as a nice, gentle, accepting person. Others believe they can accept God (the Father) but feel no obligation to accept Jesus as His one and only Son. Some even think by following this latter view they can affirm commonality with those of other religions who believe in God but do not accept Jesus as more than a prophet or teacher. Both of these views are wrong. The Bible teaches complete continuity between God the Father and Jesus His Son. It also teach-

es that all who truly know and honor God the Father will embrace the Son.

In our first focal passage, John 1:17-23, Jesus is defending Himself after He had healed a man who had been sick for thirty-eight years, when the Jews confronted Him about healing on the Sabbath. Since working was the basis for contention, Jesus points to God as a continuing worker. Although the Father rested from His creative activity (Gen. 2:2), He must work to sustain the universe. Jesus must work also to bring in the new creation. Jesus was asserting that God was His own Father, thus claiming equality with God.

No arrogance marked Jesus' claim in verse 19, which was

balanced by complete dependence on and subordination to the Father. To demonstrate the reality of the relationship between He and His Father, Jesus told the Jews that greater works than the healing of the sick man would be forthcoming. One of the greater

works is the raising of the dead (v. 21). Clearly this is as much a creative act as the original impartation of life. In verses 22 and 23, Jesus is saying to the Jews that the Father doesn't judge anyone, but has committed all judgment unto Him (the Son). Behind this sharing of authority is the design that the Son shall receive honor equally with the Father. To refuse it is to dishonor the Father. A person cannot drive a wedge between the Father and Son, and thus accept, honor, or worship one of them while rejecting the other.

The works spoken of in v. 36 were given to Jesus to attest His divine mission. Notice the

word *finish*. The works prepared the way for the work, which we now know was finished on Calvary and which needs no revision. Verse 37 says that as a part of the greater witness, our Lord included the testimony of the Father contained in the scriptures. The inaccessibility of God, due to His spirituality, is overcome to a considerable degree through the revelation of Himself in the scriptures of the Old Testament. In verse 38 Jesus speaks of His word. The word had not taken root in Jesus' hearers. The proof lies in the fact that they had not received Him of whom the word speaks.

In John 5:39 - 42, Jesus knew the Jews were in the habit of searching the scriptures because they recognized that these contained the secret of eternal life. Acquaintance with the Law was the goal of Jewish piety; so the written Word tended to become an end in itself. But the scripture testify of a person. The tragedy was that person was now present, and

religious men would not come to Him for the life they vainly sought in the letter of the Word. Jesus wasn't working for honor for Himself, He wanted them to believe so they might have the eternal life they sought. The basic reason for the lack of response to Christ and His claims was the lack of the love of God in their hearts.

In verses 46-47, Jesus tells the Jews if they had believed in Moses they would have believed in Him, but they failed to receive Moses' prophetic announcements regarding the Christ, therefore they would not believe Him.

All the Bible study in the world is no good if it doesn't lead one to honor and obey Jesus as God's Son. We cannot claim to believe the Bible and not believe in Jesus. If we truly believe what we read in the Bible, we will honor and obey Jesus because the true message of the Bible points to Him.

Lofton is a member of Willow Grove Church, Collins.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

How Courage Triumphs

Esther 5:1-7:10

By Tim Alexander

God's hand was evident throughout the book of Esther. God's hand is always at work, but many times we fail to see that. "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose." (Romans 8:28) All things in Esther's life were not good. Her parents both died and she was adopted by her relative, Mordecai. After see the complete picture of her life, we know that Esther was strategically placed in the royal court as a queen to this specific king at this exact time. This queen was in her role for "such a time as this," to boldly and courageously speak to the king about her request. This request, to save her and her

people, was presented beautifully at a banquet hosted by the queen.

1. Step out on Faith (Esther 5:1-3)

Esther had prepared spiritually for this day. She fasted for three days before she approached the king who was sitting on his royal throne. Fearing death or facing a victory, she knew she would either be rejected or accepted. She courageously stood at the center court. Then the king held out his scepter. The scepter, part of the royal regalia, was a staff or baton. It symbolized the power and authority of the king. To extend the scepter to a visitor was a non-verbal signal of the approval to approach the throne. One hurdle had been cleared for Esther. Now with courage Esther



Alexander

2. State the Facts (Esther 7:1-6)

Upon the request of Esther, the king and Haman came to the banquet. For a second time, the king asked Esther for her request. Tactful Esther did not respond. Her only request was for another banquet with the king and Haman. At the second banquet, Esther tactfully and skillfully made her request that if the king were pleased with her, he would spare her life and the lives of her people. Esther revealed two things with that statement. First, she revealed she was Jewish and she also revealed that the mastermind behind the destruction of her people was Haman, while Haman was in the

room. Esther did not talk behind his back; she just revealed the facts in front the king and Haman in person. After Esther's request, Haman was terrified before the king and queen. Haman knew the end was near.

3. See Justice Served (Esther 7:9-10)

In a strange twist of fate, the very gallows that Haman had prepared for Mordecai to die on would be the gallows that Haman would hang from. The king's anger was upon Haman. "The righteous is delivered from trouble, and it comes to the wicked instead" (Proverbs 11:8 NKJV). Evidently the news of the seventy-five foot gallows at Haman's house had reached the palace. The king, stewing in his anger against Haman, heard from Harbana, one of the king's servants, that Haman conveniently had a gallows at his house. Four words changed Haman's destiny. The king said "Hang him on it." Haman died on the gallows he ordered to be built. The scripture says that

after Haman's death, the king's fury subsided.

"Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked," Paul knew you can not deceive God. The Bible also says "A man reaps what he sows." Haman sowed anger against Mordecai. He later reaped the king's anger. The Bible also says, "He who sows wickedness reaps trouble." (Proverbs 22:8 NIV)

Queen Esther can teach us many things which we can apply to our lives. First, Esther used God's wisdom and time to deal with a difficult situation. As we learned in Nehemiah and Ezra both had difficult situations to face and opposition to what needed to be done. You and I are no exception. The Bible says, "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble." We all need grace and we all need to give grace. Second, a life filled with anger seldom accomplishes good things. Finally, may our life be pleasing to our King.

Alexander is Minister of Education, Harrisburg Church, Tupelo.

Guidelines for submitting news and photographs



The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

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Photograph attachments are permissible. Please make articles concise. Include the **who, what, when, where** details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts

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All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to crop-

ping. Photographs must depict people. No landscape-, building-, or object-only photographs will be printed. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. Requests to return photographs must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

China changes policies, but little improvement seen

WASHINGTON (BP) — Chinese officials are changing religious regulations as the 2008 Summer Olympics approaches, but some of those changes have proved detrimental to people of faith, witnesses said at a recent Capitol Hill hearing.

The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) heard testimony from Chinese religious leaders and human rights advocates on the situation in China as the city of Beijing prepares for the Olympics.

"The changing strategies and tactics of the public security officials... suggests that the Chinese authorities are becoming concerned about appearing more tolerant of Christians in the eyes of the international community.

However, there seems to be less evidence of a genuine change in their broad policy," Bob Fu, president of China Aid Association, said.

Sharon Hom, executive director of Human Rights in China, told the commissioners, "The situation is getting worse... [I]t's been consistently getting worse."

The approach of the Olympics has given hope to human rights activists, however. The international spotlight hopefully will increase leverage during the next 18 months to encourage China to be more respectful of the rights of its citizens, said Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission in Nashville.

The commission hopes Chinese officials will be concerned about the potential for negative articles to be written while tourists and journalists are in Beijing for the Olympics, said Land, a USCIRF commissioner.

"China desperately wants the Olympics to be a huge success, and it wants to put the best face forward that it can during the Olympic Games," Land told Baptist Press after the Jan. 31 hearing.

The Chinese government officially implemented new regulations in March 2005. The public security officials' new tactics include interrogating church members during a raid rather than officially arresting them, Fu said at the hearing. Arrests have declined significantly — 2,000 reported arrests in 2005 went down to 600 in 2006.

Property destruction rose, however, Fu said. "Local officials closed and demolished more house churches in 2006 than 2005. A new tendency was to target house church leaders with criminal accusations."

Cai Zhouhua, a house church pastor in Beijing, was convicted in November 2005 of "illegal operation of a business" for publishing and distributing Bibles without government approval, Fu added.

In addition to Fu, other witnesses at the hearing included Joseph Kung, who spoke about the Roman Catholic Church in China; Bhuchung K. Tsiring, testifying for Tibetan Buddhists; and Erping Zhang,



ON PATROL — In this undated photo, Chinese military personnel keep an eye on Tiananmen Square in Beijing, China. The communist country has apparently begun relaxing certain policies toward religious groups as part of the government's public relations campaign prior to the 2008 Olympics. (BP photo)

who reported on the Falun Gong spiritual movement.

Among other changes, China has addressed problems in its judicial system, according to the USCIRF. National scandals involving cases of wrongful prosecution and death in police custody convinced the Supreme People's Procuratorate (SPP) to evaluate itself.

The SPP, which is China's

highest national agency prosecuting crimes, has investigated cases of illegal detention and has punished law enforcement officials who use torture to extract confessions.

"These reforms may bring more badly needed transparency and accountability into legal proceedings," the USCIRF had said in a November 2005 report.

One step the Chinese govern-

ment could take to improve the situation is to ratify and implement the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the USCIRF has said. China signed the covenant in 1998.

The USCIRF is a nine-member, nonpartisan commission. The president selects three members of the panel, while congressional leaders name the other six.

Southern Baptists gearing up for Olympics 2008 effort in China

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — As China races to spiff up for the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing, Southern Baptist workers are preparing for a different kind of gold.

Ministry teams are working with churches in the United States for thousands of volunteers to sow Gospel seeds through Olympic-related ministry events.

"It's encouraging and exciting to see the interest level among Southern Baptist churches," said Richard Darby (name changed for security reasons), a Southern Baptist worker helping organize ministries for the games.

"Our people understand that coming into China for the Olympics is more than the games," he said. "It's about actually impacting the country and the people of China. To me, that's what it's all about."

Anticipation is at a fever pitch in Beijing. Advertisements displaying the "Friendlies," the five Beijing Olympic mascots, dot the city's buses and billboards. A citywide tangle of construction cranes signals the progress of new sporting venues. The government even has mobilized a squad of "hygiene police" who levy fines

against Beijing residents found spitting or littering.

While China prepares for an Olympiad unlike any other, Christian ministry teams are preparing for a spiritual harvest unlike any other, with Darby noting that the games have motivated a focus on China among both small and large U.S. congregations, many of whom previously have shied away from the magnitude of the China task.

"We are seeing an awakening of our people to go through that window of opportunity into what has long been seen as such a closed-off place," he said.

As the Olympic Games draw closer, Chinese organizations from all sectors are seeking innovative ways to connect with the world. For Southern Baptists, these relationships are a natural bridge to share Christ with a spiritually hungry nation.

Opportunities abound for involvement before, during and after the games. Possibilities include crisis intervention, counseling, first aid, sports camps and clinics, dramas, musical performances,



face painting, and humanitarian work.

Project leaders emphasize that volunteers are desperately needed long before the torch is lit in 2008. Prayerwalking teams are a necessary precursor to a successful ministry during

the Olympics. English speakers also are in high demand to help public-sector workers struggling to meet mandatory English requirements before the games start.

Darby is strongly encouraging those interested in leading volunteer teams during the summer of 2008 to participate in one of several familiarization trips during 2007. Leaders need to be prepared to manage their teams with little oversight from the overall Baptist Olympic ministries team amid the crush of volunteers expected in 2008.

"People who bring groups to China [during the Olympics] without having been to China before will be limiting their ministry potential," Darby said.

Participants in pre-2008 familiarization trips not only will receive necessary training but also will have a chance to develop a spiritual burden for the Chinese people as they travel to different cities and regions.

"I want them to look in the faces of the people of China and understand their need for Jesus,"

Darby said. "They can then lead their team with a broken heart so we can help the Chinese see their need for Jesus."

Southern Baptist workers are anticipating a great spiritual harvest through Olympic ministry, but they know that nothing can happen without a strong undergirding of prayer. Several churches already have committed prayer teams to meet weekly until the games end. The team wants both churches and individuals to commit to faithful prayer for God's Spirit to blaze the way for His message in China.

While Southern Baptist organizers are excited about the spiritual possibilities, they recognize that working in China will be different from other locales.

"In Athens or in Australia, teams already had support from a strong network of Baptist churches on the ground. We don't have that," Darby said. "But God is already doing some miraculous things to prepare the way."

Editor's note: To learn more about how to volunteer at the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing, visit easia.imb.org or contact volunteer2008@topicbox.com.